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WORKS IN PROGRESS

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Toward free health care in Olympia

Local anarchists work on starting a free health clinic

By Brooke Stepp

On May 21, the Olympia branch of Common Action hosted a forum on health care with the hopes of someday establishing a free or affordable medical clinic in the downtown Olympia area. This forum came at a much needed time when the only other free clinic in the area, the Neighborhood Free Medical Clinic in Lacey, had shut its doors, and other clinics that serve low-income populations had so many patients that they were forced to turn people away.

The economic crisis and the trajectory of global capitalism in the last 40 years has affected access to health care. Traditionally, many people in the United States had health insurance coverage through their employers. However, with the changing economy of the post-WWII era as well as the exporting of manufacturing jobs overseas, this has become less and less true. The economic crisis has affected even the middle class, which previously survived booms and busts of the business cycle. As it deepens, more and more people in the US lack jobs and health insurance.

Fundamentally, we at Common Action believe that everyone has the right to affordable, accessible health care, and the knowledge needed to prevent illness and disease. However, the economic events of the last year and the failed promises of politicians including Barack Obama show us that in order to make this a reality, we need to come together as a community to do it ourselves from the bottom up. Because of this need, a group is working toward developing a vision for a free clinic in Olympia. The project is an example of creating the world we want to see in the here and now: a world based on cooperation, mutual aid, solidarity, and direct democracy.

To make this a reality, we must create spaces for people to meet their needs for health, safety, and a sense of belonging and empowerment. We will need to focus on health at every level, from the individual to the societal level. To achieve a healthy world, we must also heal ourselves and our communities, and we must challenge corporate and state power over our lives.

From its inception, the free clinic project has been an exercise in grassroots and direct democracy, uniting diverse groups of people from throughout the Olympia community. As the project evolves and grows, Common Action members will continue to be involved and push for a clinic that not only meets immediate needs, but also helps people to empower themselves and others.

> From its inception, the free clinic project has been an exercise in grassroots and direct democracy, uniting diverse groups of people from throughout the Olympia community.

What is the Common Action vision for the clinic? First and foremost, the clinic must be accessible to all members of our community. This means that it must have evening and weekend hours for people balancing the demands of work and family. The clinic must also be accessible to marginalized groups such as the houseless, women, people of color and those who identify as LGBTQQ.

Oftentimes, the allopathic medical paradigm disempowers people and separates us from our bodies, giving us the idea that only highly trained and educated professionals know how to treat our ailments. This paradigm has disproportionately affected marginalized groups. Two examples are forced sterilization and a refusal to treat transgendered folks among many practitioners.

Therefore we must recognize the value of allopathic medicine, but we must also move beyond its limitations, and give people the knowledge to listen to their bodies and prevent future disease and illness. There is talk of nutritional workshops and counseling, a lending library, and a community garden as approaches to broadening the scope of services beyond traditional allopathy.

Also, if we want the clinic to be a truly democratic institution, there must be widespread community involvement and support in the project with an emphasis on building connections between existing community institutions and groups. Furthermore, those who use the clinic must have a stake in decision-making. In the traditional hierarchical non-profit structure, educated professionals determine services and people in need passively receive them. However, Common Action wants people who use the clinic to be active members of this project who have a say in what happens at the clinic.

One way of doing that is to encourage clinic users to volunteer as "payment" for their treatment. Volunteering could include many different activities such as doing street outreach, speaking about the clinic at a church or community group, doing paperwork, sending out mailings, answering phones, or cleaning up at the clinic. This type of work would help people to feel like they are fundamentally a part of the day-to-day operations of the clinic and have a stake in it existing besides their own individual needs.

Furthermore, it shows people that when we come together, we can find real and lasting solutions to our problems that work better than those imposed from the top by politicians, bosses or corporations. In an era when we have seen an upsurge in faith in these top-down solutions with the promise of "real change" from Obama and his supporters, projects like the Olympia free clinic are particularly powerful in demonstrating the importance and necessity of collective action.

To get involved, or to learn more, contact olyfreehealthcare@riseup.net.

Brooke Stepp is a local activist and member of Common Action, Northwest Anarchist People of Color, and of the Olympia chapters of Students for a Democratic Society and Industrial Workers of the World.

I PITY THE FOOL...

...who doesn't check out our primary election coverage on Page 4!

An activist reflects on John Towery, the hacker

By Ringo

There have been countless stories told about John Towery, the local "activist" who was recently exposed as being a paid military spy, and many more wait to be told. Some of them are waiting on more evidence, some of them are waiting for people to hear the news about John, and some of them might be waiting on yet something else. This story was waiting on data from a certain hard drive: something which I will likely never have.

One of the important aspects of being an informant is being able to get people to identify with you. You want to be friendly, perhaps outgoing, but most of all people have to like you. If people like you and can identify with you, they're more likely to trust you with the information you're there for in the first place. How they gain the trust of each individual in the group is often different.

In his attempt to lure me into trusting him, John showed off his computer hacking skills. He came to more than one of my computer security workshops and asked good questions. His background, he said, was in computers. Allegedly, he does tech at Ft. Lewis. He gave me a drive down to Tacoma in his surprisingly clean SUV so I could give a workshop there and one time he brought around ten people to a workshop of mine in Olympia. He said he was there to see our COMS presentation which we canceled at the last minute due to time conflicts. Ironically, he ended up sitting through another four-hour security workshop that he had planned on missing. Throughout the course of our friendship, John would sit through three of these security workshops, one of which was at my apartment. Afterwards, I gave him the phone number for my "secure line" which only three other people would ever have. We talked about computers, networking troubles and the need for a stronger radical tech infrastructure. Finally, I thought, somebody I can talk to about computers who will know what the hell I'm talking about. Such people aren't easy to find.

> On one level, his work in our community was just a big hack. He broke in, got past our security, and stole internal data from us.

Towery said that he couldn't make it down to Olympia that much but that he wanted to be on Olympia Hackbloc's internal discussion list. We figured it couldn't hurt as nothing happened there anyway. Towery donated hundreds of dollars of software to us, including Windows Server 2003 and a number of computer training manuals. He was even nice enough to donate some Department of Defense computer training manuals (not classified or anything like that) full of viruses. I actually hadn't realized there were viruses in the manuals until later when somebody mentioned it to me in passing. We had a look and there wasn't anything Fed-specific, just some viruses that were in the course material for educational purposes.

Sometimes when I'm bored at Media Island, I do some basic maintenance on the computers there. I scan for viruses, delete old files, and lock down the settings. On one particular trip after John's true identity had been discovered, someone told me John had tried to fix some of those computers. The Media Island computers have always been full of viruses, I wasn't concerned about that. My concern was that John might have put some special keylogger/monitor-

▸ **TOWERY,** continued on page 7

John Towery (photo by PMR-INFO)

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Works In Progress is a free, volunteer-operated progressive community newspaper based in Olympia, Washington. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of *Works In Progress* and are solely those of the authors.

Submissions
Please send text as Word attachments. Artwork and photos can be sent electronically or we can scan them for you as camera-ready/black & white.

We value well-researched pieces that cover news stories that would be informative to readers in the South Sound. We value news and analysis over opinion pieces. We value stories by local authors. We value submissions on stories that are misrepresented or ignored by the mainstream media.

WIP reserves the right to publish in whole or part all submissions. For editing purposes, please enclose your phone number.

Articles may be reprinted. Please cite source.

If you don't see your issue being covered in Works In Progress*, it's because you aren't writing about it! (Or aren't finding someone else to cover it!)*

Send submissions to *olywip@gmail.com*, or mail to Works In Progress, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507-0295.

Governing Tool
The following statement is part of the Editorial Policy and is the governing tool for the Anti-Discrimination Clause:

WIP *will make every effort to work with the contributor of material considered by* WIP *to be offensive in order to reach a mutually agreed upon resolution, but* WIP *reserves the right as a last resort to edit or not print submitted material.*

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Anti-Discrimination Clause
We will collectively endeavor to be sensitive and respectful to all those oppressed in this society, and their issues. However, if and when we should make a mistake in this regard, we expect to acknowledge it and to express regret for injury or insult given.

Back Issues
Some back issues are available in the Timberland Library system. *WIP* is being archived on microfilm by the UW Library.

"The trouble with the world is that the stupid are cocksure and the intelligent are full of doubt." - Bertrand Russell

WIP Schedule

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September 25

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ANNOUNCEMENTS/EVENTS

Olympia POWER Outage - Potluck

Sept. 7, 5:30-8 pm
First United Methodist Church,
1224 Legion Way SE

Please join us on Monday, Sept. 7, for POWER Outage, POWER's first Monday get together. We'll start at 5:30 pm with a potluck at the First United Methodist Church, 1224 Legion Way SE. From 6 - 8 pm, we'll plan our approach to the state legislative session starting in January. What is important to you? What would you like to see lawmakers do in Washington? How do you think we can get them to hear our issues? Please, come and share your ideas. No experience necessary. Bring the kids, we'll have onsite childcare. Let us know if you need help with transportation.

POWER (Parents Organizing for Welfare and Economic Rights) is an organization of low-income parents and allies advocating for a strong social safety net while working toward a world where children and care giving are truly valued, and the devastation of poverty has been eradicated.

701 Franklin Street SE Olympia, WA 98501
360-352-9716 toll free 866-343-9716
welfarerights@riseup.net
http://www.oly-wa.us/power/
http://www.myspace.com/parentsorganizing
http://www.facebook.com/pages/Parents-Organizing-for-Welfare-and-Economic-Rights/

The Northwest Detention Center - What is it, and how do we support those inside?

A PowerPoint Presentation with Lori Alward
Monday Sept. 14, 7-9 pm
Olympia Unitarian Universalist Congregation
2200 East End Street NW, Olympia

Located on a Superfund site on the Tacoma tideflats, the NWDC is a prison that holds people awaiting hearings on immigration-related charges and/or potential deportation. Privately-owned and -operated by The GEO Group Inc. (formerly Wackenhut), it can hold about 1,000 inmates and is being expanded to detain more than 1,500 people. The average stay of detainees is 33 days, but a significant minority remain locked up for months or even years. A recent study by the Seattle University School of Law and OneAmerica reported that conditions at the Tacoma facility violate both international and domestic laws that grant detained immigrants the right to food, due process and humane treatment.

The US Customs and Border Patrol has claimed the right to operate anywhere in the US within 100 miles of the national boundary and asserts the authority to stop, search and detain anyone. Nearly two-thirds of the US population lives within 100 miles of the border—the ACLU calls this a "Constitution-free Zone." Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), an agency within the Department of Homeland Security, has as one of its missions to find and deport undocumented residents. ICE establishes illegal traffic checkpoints, searches grocery stores, raids worksites, invades schools and even day-care centers. They stop people, often through racial profiling, and demand documentation proving legal residency or citizenship. ICE detains people first and asks questions later. Some people detained in the NWDC were born here and/or are US citizens.

Lori Alward, Education Coordinator at Tacoma Community House, is the head of the Education Committee of the NWDC Roundtable, a consortium of over thirty organizations—including activist, health care, higher education, law enforcement, legal, political representative, religious, and social service organizations. She will show a PowerPoint presentation and talk about the Roundtable's work with detainees. Sponsored by the Social Justice Committee of the Olympia Unitarian Universalist Congregation and Bridges Not Walls. For more info, email: bridgesnotwalls@riseup.net.

Cooling a Fevered Planet: The Politics & Economics of Solving the Climate Crisis

Sept. 3, 7 pm
Traditions Cafe
300 5th Ave. SW, Olympia

We know the danger. We have the technology. So what's stopping us? Come for this free event to listen to Gar Lipow and Dr. Zoltan Grossman present on behalf of the Olympia Movement for Justice & Peace about our ecological and financial crisis.

Two community radio fundraisers

Sept. 5 and Sept. 11
Both at Fertile Ground
311 9th Ave. SE, Olympia

Come support your local alternative media with two separate but equally crucial evening fundraisers.

On Sept. 5, Media Island International and KOWA 106.5 FM will host a fundraiser featuring musical guests.

On Sept. 11, Free Radio Olympia will have a fundraiser, also featuring live music. FRO needs funds to make a swift comeback from a FCC cease-and-desist order handed down recently.

Lisa Sullivan - Honduras, Venezuela, and the movement sweeping across Latin America

Wednesday, Sept. 30
Two events:
Evergreen State College, Sem. 2, E 1105, at 1:30 pm
Traditions Cafe, 300 5th Ave. SW, at 7 pm

Lisa Sullivan is the director of the Latin American office of the School of the Americas Watch and organizer of Partnership America Latina (PAL). Recently, she traveled to Honduras with Fr. Joe Mulligan and seven others to demand democracy be restored by reinstating the elected President Zelaya, who has been ousted by a military coup. Sullivan had just been to Honduras the month prior to the coup, asking President Zelaya to stop sending his troops to the School of the Americas / WHINSEC for training. Sullivan has already met seven Latin American Presidents and has made similar requests to them, with some success.

During two separate events on Sept. 30, Sullivan will share with us her overall impressions of the recent political and economic changes in Latin America and the U.S. role there. During the daytime event at Evergreen, Sullivan will speak about the connection between Venezuela and Honduras. And in the evening, at Traditions Cafe, she will speak to the present struggle and recent coup in Honduras.

For more information, contact Peter at (360) 867-6431.

Conference unites region against financial, environmental struggles

Our nation and the world face two great crises. The financial crisis of 2008 triggered the worst economic slump since the Great Depression. Foreclosures, bankruptcies, and layoffs continue as older generations watch hard earned savings vanish, younger families live in fear of layoffs and bills they cannot pay, students despair of finding jobs when they graduate, and immigrants face detention and deportation. Meanwhile, the government lavishes trillion dollar bailouts without conditions on the Wall Street banks whose reckless behavior brought on the crisis, but vacillates when it comes to launching aggressive programs to help those who live on Main Street.

The greatest ecological crisis humanity has ever faced continues unabated. Temperatures rise, ice melts, and rain forests disappear as the planet lurches forward into dangerous, unchartered waters. Meanwhile, well-heeled lobbyists for fossil fuel industries and global agribusiness gear up in Washington DC and State legislatures across the country to stymie attempts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Northwest region of the United States has pioneered effective responses to environmental and economic problems in the past. A decade ago the "Battle for Seattle" during the World Trade Organization Ministerial meetings sparked a critical reevaluation of neoliberal globalization. Now that this model has been discredited, it is time for us to collectively determine what comes next.

From Friday Oct. 2 through Sunday, October 4th, a group of internationally known speakers headed by Noam Chomsky will join academics, activists, and visionary thinkers from the Northwest region in Portland, Oregon to explore the way forward out of the twin crises challenging humanity. The EcoNvergence gathering will take place in downtown Portland at the First Unitarian Church, whose ministries have a long history of aiding campaigns promoting social justice and environmental preservation, and at nearby Portland State University.

More than 40 environmental, labor, human rights, social justice, student, peace, and community organizations from the Northwest have been working together since the beginning of the year to organize the conference. The program committee received over a hundred exciting proposals for panels, workshops, and cultural events. Each day there will be plenaries as well as scores of panels and workshops exploring how we can make positive changes within our communities and push national leaders to respond more effectively to the economic and environmental crises.

Conference registration and participation are free except for Chomsky's and Derrick Jensen's presentation. Both events are accepting scholarships to attend for those in need. All speakers who participate at the gathering are also free to attend any event. There will also be presentations from Olympia groups and individuals.

If you would like to know more or get involved in planning the conference as an individual or as a participating organization, visit econvergence.org/contact. To speak directly with a local organizer from Olympia, contact Peter Bohmer at (360) 867-6431

Carpools will be leaving from the Harrison and Divison parking lot on Friday morning (Oct. 2), Friday afternoon and Saturday morning (Oct. 3). For specific info about the parking lot departures and presentations from Olympia groups and individuals, check out the announcements section of October's *Works in Progress*.

A departing buspool will need $5 from or back to Olympia, $10 roundtrip. To join the bus (tentatively set for a Friday afternoon departure and Sunday evening return) or to find out more info, contact Brendan at MobyDick1980@netscape.net.

Leonard Peltier denied parole

Statement from Eric Seitz, attorney for Mr. Peltier from August 18:

The Bush Administration holdovers on the U.S. Parole Commission today adopted the position of the FBI that anyone who may be implicated in the killings of its agents should never be paroled and should be left to die in prison.

Despite judicial determinations that the unrepentant FBI fabricated evidence and presented perjured testimony in Leonard Peltier's prosecution; despite a jury's acquittal on grounds of self-defense of two co-defendants who were found to have engaged in the same conduct of which Mr. Peltier was convicted; despite Mr. Peltier's exemplary record during his incarceration for more than 33 years and his clearly demonstrated eligibility for parole; despite letters and petitions calling for his release submitted by millions of people in this country and around the world including one of the judges who ruled on his earlier appeals; and despite his advanced age and deteriorating health, the Parole Commission today informed Mr. Peltier that his "release on parole would depreciate the seriousness of your offenses and would promote disrespect for the law," and set a reconsideration hearing in July 2024.

This is the extreme action of the same law enforcement community that brought us the indefinite imprisonment of suspected teenage terrorists, tortures, and killings in CIA prisons around the world, and promoted widespread disrespect for the democratic concepts of justice upon which this country supposedly was founded. These are the same institutions that have never treated indigenous peoples with dignity or respect or accepted any responsibility for centuries of intolerance and abuse.

At his parole hearing on July 28th Leonard Peltier expressed regret and accepted responsibility for his role in the incident in which the two FBI agents and one Native American activist died as the result of a shootout on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Mr. Peltier emphasized that the shootout occurred in circumstances where there literally was a war going on between corrupt tribal leaders, supported by the government, on the one hand, and Native American traditionalists and young activists on the other. He again denied -- as he has always denied -- that he intended the deaths of anyone or that he fired the fatal shots that killed the two agents, and he reminded the hearing officer that one of his former co-defendants recently admitted to having fired the fatal shots himself.

Accordingly, it is not true that Leonard Peltier participated in "the execution style murders of two FBI agents," as the Parole Commission asserts, and there never has been credible evidence of Mr. Peltier's responsibility for the fatal shots as the FBI continues to allege. Moreover, given the corrupt practices of the FBI itself, it is entirely untrue that Leonard Peltier's parole at this juncture will in any way "depreciate the seriousness" of his conduct and/or "promote disrespect for the law."

We will continue to seek parole and clemency for Mr. Peltier and to eventually bring this prolonged injustice to a prompt and fair resolution.

VICS
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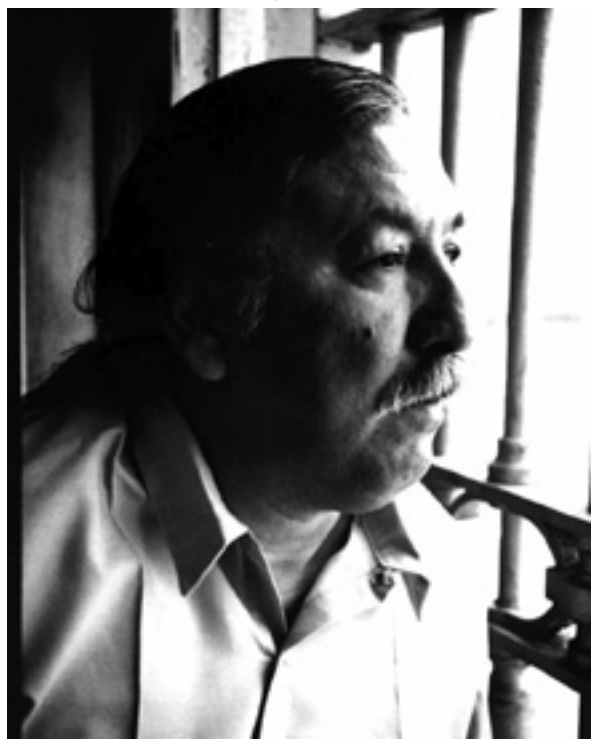
The War Against Leonard Peltier Continues

A talk by Zoltan Grossman at the Tacoma Leonard Peltier Support Rally



I'm Zoltan Grossman, representing the Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace, or OMJP. I used to work in Wisconsin (and for a time in South Dakota) for treaty rights and against the mining companies, and recently moved here to teach at Evergreen. I've also worked to free Leonard Peltier, and have heard for years about the Tacoma Leonard Peltier Support Group, and am honored to speak here today.

The OMJP came together after 9/11 to work not just for peace, but for justice, not just for an end to wars overseas, but an end to the wars at home. We recognize that the original conquest of Native America for its natural resources was the testing ground, the prototype, the template, for American colonialism overseas, in the Philippines, later in Vietnam and Central America, and today in Iraq and Afghanistan.

What happened on the Pine Ridge Reservation in the early 1970s was a smaller scale version of those wars, an internal colonial war, a mopping-up operation back in the North American heartland. In South Vietnam, the Pentagon had propped up a corrupt right-wing dictator named Thieu, and his brutal army. In South Dakota, the BIA propped up a corrupt right-wing tribal chairman named Wilson and his G.O.O.N. (Guardians Of the Oglala Nation) squad.

During the 1973 siege of Wounded Knee, the Pine Ridge Reservation was transformed into a war zone, with FBI troops dressed in camos, Huey helicopters, and overflights of Phantom jets. Vietnam veterans fought on both sides in those rolling hills for 71 days. If the siege had not ended on May 8th, General Haig was prepared to order in the 82nd Airborne on May 10th, risking a second Wounded Knee massacre. The siege was a Vietnam-style counterinsurgency in miniature, and was recognized as such at that time in the international media. Afterwards, dozens of Lakotas were killed in a reign of terror as the G.O.O.N. death squad carried out the federal government's dirty work.

> To still be holding Leonard as a prisoner from the Pine Ridge war is as if prisoners were still held at that time from World War II, or as if prisoners were still being held today from the Vietnam War.

Two years later, in 1975, the battle near Oglala left two FBI and one Lakota dead. 1975 was also the year that the Vietnam war finally ended. In fact, the shootout in South Dakota on June 26th took place less than two months after April 30th, when the U.S. lost the war in South Vietnam. That's how long Leonard Peltier has been in prison. To still be holding Leonard as a prisoner from the Pine Ridge war is as if prisoners were still held at that time from World War II, or as if prisoners were still being held today from the Vietnam War. That's how long ago it was.

In the Vietnam War, about 58,000 American soldiers died. About two million Vietnamese civilians and troops also died, and their land laid to waste by bombs and poison. Yet in recent years, there has been a process of reconciliation between the U.S. and Vietnam, despite the harsh history of conflict between them. Many American veterans have visited Vietnam, to try in a mature and patient way to heal the divisions of war. Even former POWs such as Senator McCain have visited Hanoi to build bridges to their former enemies.

We want to ask this one question of the FBI. Do you mean to tell us that former American POWs can set aside our 58,000 dead in the interest of peace, and the Vietnamese can set aside 2 million of their own family members who died, but you can't come to terms with the loss of your 2 agents in South Dakota that happened just as long ago? You can't come to grips that your tragic loss was also in the context of an unnecessary war, in which many more Lakota families lost their loved ones?

Whenever it seems that momentum is building to free Leonard Peltier and bring this war honorably to an end, the FBI hierarchy steps in, to lobby to keep him in prison. Even former agents come out of retirement to purchase ads attacking Leonard, and intimidating politicians into keeping him behind bars. In the lobby of the FBI headquarters in D.C., they have a diorama, a mock-up of the battle scene at the Jumping Bull Ranch, to remind all visitors of the savage act. Instead of keeping hope alive, the FBI is keeping hate alive.

There are those who believe that Leonard Peltier is guilty. I'm not one of them; I believe he is not guilty. I used to argue the evidence of the case with those people (that even those AIM members at the scene who engaged the agents were acquitted on the grounds of self-defense, and so on). But now I go one step further. I say to them that even if you believe Leonard is guilty, that does not let you off the hook. You also should be demanding that he be freed, because he is a political prisoner in the 21st century. Leonard has been held for 30 years—longer than others would be held for the same alleged crime—only because the FBI still has a political ax to grind.

And even if Leonard was a fighter who engaged in combat against the U.S. government, the war is over! The war against Native American sovereignty continues in different forms, but the three-year war at Pine Ridge ended three decades ago. Yet they still hold a prisoner from that war.

Our government can learn a lesson from the peace talks in countries such as El Salvador, South Africa, Northern Ireland, and Palestine. In the peace process between the government and insurgent forces, as part of the negotiations, the POWs are always released. When the truce is declared, it's time to let the political prisoners go, to finally leave behind the fears of the past. By freeing Leonard Peltier 30 years overdue, our country can not only do him justice, but save just a little bit of its own soul.

Zoltan Grossman is an Evergreen State College faculty member, specializing in geography and Native American studies. He is also a member of Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace.

Olympia City Council primary election recap

RESULTS

The August 18 primary election is in the books, and the races for the November 3 election are set. Under the current "Top 2" voting system, only the top two vote-getters in the primary advance to the general election. Here are the primary election results for the Olympia City Council races, with the two names for each race you'll see on the ballots this fall bolded:

CITY COUNTIL SEAT #4:
Karen Rogers - 39.84%
(Opposes the isthmus rezone)
Karen Veldheer - 30.93%
(Also opposes the isthmus rezone)
Amy Tousley - 29.23%
(Supports rezone and development)

Incumbent Karen Messmer is not running for re-election, as previously reported.

CITY COUNCIL SEAT #5:
Stephen Buxbaum - 42.39%
(Opposes the isthmus rezone)
Jeff Kingsbury - 30.32%
(Elected incumbent - Supports isthmus rezone and development)
Janine Gates - 27.29%
(Opposes the isthmus rezone)

We also have two other city council seats up for grabs this November, but since only two candidates ran in each of those races, there was no primary, and the two candidates both automatically advance to the general election:

CITY COUNCIL SEAT #6:
Jeannine Dellwo Roe
(Opposes the isthmus rezone)
Joan Machlis
(Appointed incumbent - Supports isthmus rezone and development)

CITY COUNCIL SEAT #7:
Joe Hyer
(Elected incumbent - Opposes the isthmus rezone, but weakly)
Tony Sermonti
(Supports the rezone and development)

TURNOUT

Although the voter turnout looked low on election day (just over 20 percent), that number has since raised as postmarked ballots continue to trickle in. The last count posted on the County Auditor's site showed that, out of 86,708 registered voters, 26,768 of them cast votes in the primary, a turnout of 30.87 percent. These numbers are not final, and should rise further before the election is certified on Sept. 2.

To put this turnout in perspective, here are the statistics on voter turnout for previous primaries (from the Auditor's website):

Primary Election Turnout
(Presidential years highlighted)

2009 - 30.87%*
2008 - 48.50%
2007 - 25.78%
2006 - 37.92%
2005 - 36.31%
2004 - 45.52%
2003 - 29.43%
2002 - 37.64%
2001 - 23.80%
2000 - 47.21%
1999 - 40.60%
1998 - 43.57%
1997 - 38.46%

*Ballots still being counted

Candidate reaction to the primary election

WIP News Service

Works in Progress was able to reach several of the City Council candidates after the primary results were known. At deadline, only Amy Tousley, Stephen Buxbaum and Karen Veldheer had responded to us. Our questions for the candidates were:

1. What do you think this election was about for Olympia?
2. Were the turnout and results what you expected?
3. What is your message to the voters who are looking ahead to the regular election?

Amy Tousley provided these responses:

I believe that the premise for this election was about selecting either continued momentum or a change in leadership.

In the open seat, two candidates represented a desire for change and one characterized continued implementation of the council's goals for the community. For the general election, the urban waterfront rezone is no longer the main issue for these candidates as it was in the primary.

On turnout:
Initially, I was uncertain how to respond to this question. Yes, I was surprised at the low voter turnout. However, if someone cannot be bothered to vote, then those who are proud to exercise democracy will prevail at the end of the day because they voted.

Looking ahead:
I am encouraging my supporters to vote for Karen Rogers for Olympia City Council. I believe that she's the more qualified of the two candidates to assume the duties and responsibilities of a councilmember, especially with respect to the challenges and opportunities that face this community and region in the near future.

Stephen Buxbaum provided these answers:

My initial thoughts are that people are concerned about how the current Council's handled a wide range of issues, from parking and the after school program to the City's budget and the isthmus rezone. The rezone for high-rises on the waterfront was a lightning rod issue – given both Kingsbury and Tousley's poor performance I think many people don't trust the Council to listen to their concerns and to work on behalf of the whole city rather than particular parts of it. The Council seems to be doing its best to do what the Bush administration did with the national budget – maxing out all of the City's available borrowing to pay for expensive capital projects downtown. They're making it harder and harder for future Councils with different priorities to do creative projects in the rest of the city's neighborhoods, because we'll be having to use our resources to pay off these escalating debts. About four percent more people voted for candidates in my race than in the other City Council race, for the open seat; I like to think that's because of the difference between Jeff on the one hand and Janine and me on the other was so dramatic. The choice was clearer.

On turnout:
There's no polling, so I really had no idea until the returns came in what they'd be like. I knew from all the doorbelling I did that many, many voters weren't happy with the current Council, and that many of them had been offended by what they saw as the lack of respect for the public in Councilmember Kingsbury's email and Facebook comments about people addressing the Council during meetings. But I had no idea how Janine and I would do relative to each other. She's a terrific person who is very well liked by a lot of people, and campaigned hard. It's clear from our preliminary precinct analysis that Janine and I did very well amongst Democrats, while Jeff did well among Republicans. I won majorities in every traditionally Democratic precinct except downtown, which Janine Gates took. This actually more or less reverses Kingsbury's results when elected four years ago – then he ran much better in the strongly Democratic precincts than in the Republican ones... Quite a few people I've talked to campaigning have told me they voted for Jeff four years ago, and had great hopes for him because of how much he's done in Olympia's theatre world, but that they've been really disappointed in what he's done on the Council – that it isn't what they expected, and that it doesn't seem as if his strengths as an actor and an impresario have turned out to be what he's really needed to serve the community in public office.

Looking ahead:
If people want to change what the city's politics are like, and how the city is run, we need to work hard, and we need to work together. At this point, big independent expenditure mailings by developers and big contributions from a few people play a very significant part in who gets elected in Olympia. Progressives need to work together to create a system for lasting change. Olympia spends about $2,000 a year for every person in the community just keeping things running, and about $1,700 a year on building stuff. We all need to be talking together and working together to give the whole community a significant say in shaping the city – not just through working on election campaigns (though those are certainly important), but also by making the neighborhood associations, community meetings, email exchanges, and real community participation more important in deciding what actually happens in the end.

And Karen Veldheer shared with us these thoughts on the primary election:

I think this election was about public disapproval of the Isthmus land use decision and a sense that elected and appointed officials do not listen or represent what the community wants. These races attracted a number of high quality challengers and voters felt comfortable selecting from the four first-time candidates since we all carried a great number of votes citywide.

On turnout:
I had projected the voter turnout would be similar to the primary races in 2007, but the turnout was much higher. It was also interesting to me that more people voted in the Position Five race (Gates, Buxbaum, Kingsbury) than in the Position Four race (Veldheer, Rogers, Tousley). I had thought the vote would be more closely split between the three candidates in Position Four. Over the next two months, I will work to get my message out and give voters a clear choice in the general election by highlighting the differences between my opponent and myself.

Looking ahead:
My message to voters is that I am a candidate that works well with others and cares. Also, I am concerned about environmental protection and being careful with taxpayer dollars.

If elected to the city council, I want to regain citizens' trust and confidence in our local government. As a neighborhood association president and member of the Olympia Coalition of Neighborhood Associations, I see the need for a City Council that has a desire to listen and represent all the citizens of Olympia, not just those that agree with the council. As the president of my neighborhood association, I have shown my ability to bring people together and tackle challenges to bring about positive results.

I want to bring spending discipline to City Hall. Capital costs can crowd out spending for other human needs and force cutbacks in city employment and programs that assure quality of life, especially for our vulnerable populations. Capital spending projects are approaching 100 million dollars and there are new spending ideas being proposed every month. Tax revenues are plummeting and new capital projects mean new operating costs, and huge increases in public debt that will be with us for decades. I will promote efficiency measures, such as business case methodology and performance audits to ensure that we are getting the best possible return from our tax dollars.

I want voters to know that I am independent and that I look at decisions from a common sense, practical perspective, not ideology or political partisanship. My campaign has been financed by local citizens and unlike my opponent, I have not made large personal loans to sustain my campaign. I see public service as being a trustee who acts for the best long-term interest of the community and above all, puts the community's interest first. I will live by these principles if I am given the honor to serve the community on the City Council.

My proven ability to work constructively with others and for an environmentally sustainable community has earned me the endorsements of Senator Karen Fraser, Representative Brendan Williams, Commissioner Sandra Romero, Tumwater city councilmember Ed Stanley, and Citizens for Responsive Local Government.

While Jeff Kingsbury did not respond to Works in Progress, he did host a fundraiser at the home of Jeannette Hawkins, former councilmember and Triway employee on August 13. Public Disclosure Commission forms suggest that Kingsbury raised $1,350.00 at this event.

WIP Hate mail

Hate mail? At Works In Progress*!? Rare, but it happened.*

After publishing our extensive coverage of the then-upcoming city council primary election over the last few months (coverage that was really just an extension of all our work on local politics since the current council first assembled two years ago), we received an earnest reply from one concerned individual who gave us quite an e-tongue lashing for what he considers our unfair treatment of councilmember Jeff Kingsbury.

Setting all evidence aside, there's nothing to say we're right and he's wrong. So, we decided, heck, why not share our most eager critic's thoughts with you, our faithful Works In Progress *readership?*

This letter, which was sent to our submission inbox at olywip@gmail.com, is being published in whole, except for the redaction of Mr. McManus's provided personal contact information. (Hey, when we said on page 2, "WIP reserves the right to publish in whole or part all submissions," we meant it!)

To the volunteer staff of the "WIP News Service":

My name is Kevin McManus, local artist, actor, and activist. I am also an avid supporter of Jeff Kingsbury for Olympia City Council. I am not writing you now to shame you for your Fox News-like reporting of an important election; nor am I writing to put you down for your use of the word "acerbic" in describing a democratically elected public official; I'm also not writing to expose your inability to list one positive accomplishment Jeff Kingsbury has made in his lifetime - never mind in the duration of his time in office; I am writing, however, to congratulate you on your success! You have painted the picture of a monster, not

▸ **HATE MAIL,** continued on next page

▸ **HATE MAIL,** cont'd from previous page

a man, to take the place of Jeff Kingsbury in the 2009 election.

There are some people, granted a small number, who will actually read this dreck and take you seriously. Your lack of fact-checking and proper research aside, people will actually take you on your word because hate rings louder than truth. You would rather support the inexperienced, ill-informed, incompetent fool or the inexperienced, ill-informed, featherbrained contessa than the man who has told you his plan and implemented it with great success. Passion beats compassion any day. The public figure who can accomplish the most in my name with the least amount of loss is the public official I want in office. I don't like the Isthumus issue either, but I am certainly not going to elect a worthless candidate - who has half the amount of passion - because I'm sad I lost my pretty view of the water. That is dangerous and stupid.

You have conjured and nurtured a controversy. Jeff Kingsbury is a good representative for the people. Your squabbling, while constitutionally protected, is not good for the people. You think it's educational, and fun to dissent. Find the truth, report the news.

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." - Martin Luther King, Jr.

Kingsbury has not, and will not alter his positions because you publish a narrow view of the world. That's why I support him.

Sincerely,
Kevin G. McManus

We are admittedly a little perplexed by Mr. McManus' primary argument, that passion is equivalent to moral character. Now, don't get us wrong. We at WIP love passion as much as the next volunteer staff of an independent hyperlocal news publication. But, as history has taught us, passion plus political power does not always equal good times. We will not name names since we would not want to be misunderstood as comparing Olympia City Council member Jeff Kingsbury to any particularly scoundrelous historical figures, when our intent is merely to discredit Mr. McManus' presented political position. But suffice to say, any public official in Olympia or beyond will have to demonstrate more than just passion for the pursuit of their own selfish interests to garner this publication's endorsement. (Even we have standards.)

Regardless, this letter has understandably demoralized the whole Works In Progress staff. All this time, we thought it was educational to dissent. We had so much fun conjuring controversies, and throwing our weight behind "incompetent fools" (read: men) and "featherbrained contessas" (read: women), that we didn't stop to think of the consequences. Not even the relief of discovering we weren't going to be put down for calling a public official "acerbic" was enough to put the cheese back on our life's burger.

But misery loves company, and fortunately for us, we're not alone in our solace. If we want, we could always go have a beer with Terrence Knight. Knight, the one-time editor of now-defunct local independent newspaper The Sitting Duck, *wrote on the council's unresponsiveness to the wishes of the public and defiance of government transparency laws in the* Duck's *final issue. Or, we could go hang out with Friends of the Waterfront, the grassroots organization concerned Olympia citizens formed in the wake of the council's push for high-rise development. And there's always Stephen Buxbaum and Janine Gates, the candidates who stepped up to run against Kingsbury, and the 69.68 percent of the voters who chose them over the incumbent.*

But Mr. McManus did rightly point out one failing of ours – a failing we would like to rectify. As a matter of fact, we do know of one positive thing Kingsbury has accomplished. We don't even have to look back through his life's work to find this golden deed. We need only look to the August primary election. Jeff Kingsbury just did us all a big favor.

He came in second.

Cindy Sheehan's lonely vigil in Obamaland

By John V. Walsh

Cindy Sheehan will be at Martha's Vineyard beginning August 25 a short way from Obama's vacation paradise of the celebrity elite but very far from the Afghanistan and Pakistan and Iraq where the body bags and cemeteries fill up each day as Obama's wars rage on. She will remain there from August 25 through August 29 and has issued a call for all peace activists to join her there. For those of us close by in the New England states and in New York City, there would seem to be a special obligation to get to Martha's Vineyard as soon as we can.

A funny thing has happened on Cindy Sheehan's long road from Crawford, Texas, to Martha's Vineyard. Many of those who claim to lead the peace movement and who so volubly praised her actions in Crawford, TX, are not to be seen, nor heard. The silence in fact is deafening, or as Cindy put it in an email to this writer, "crashingly deafening." Where are the email appeals to join Cindy from The Nation or from AFSC or Peace Action or "Progressive" Democrats of America (PDA) or even Code Pink? Or United for Peace and Justice? (No wonder UFPJ is essentially closing shop, bereft of most of their contributions and shriveling up following the thinly veiled protest behind the "retirement" of Leslie Cagan.) And what about MoveOn (although it was long ago thoroughly discredited as principled opponents of war or principled in any way shape or form except slavish loyalty to the "other" War Party)? And of course sundry, "socialist" organizations are also missing in action since their particular dogma will not be front and center. These worthies and many others have vanished into the fog of Obama's wars.

Just to be sure, this writer contacted several of the "leaders" of the "official" peace movement in the Boston area – AFSC, Peace Action, Green Party of MA (aka Green Rainbow Party) and some others. Not so much as the courtesy of a reply resulted from this effort - although the GRP at least posted a notice of the action. (It is entirely possible that some of these organizations might mention Cindy's action late enough and quickly enough so as to cover their derrieres while ensuring that Obama will not be embarrassed by protesting crowds.) We here in the vicinity of Beantown are but a hop, skip and cheap ferry ride from Martha's Vineyard. Same for NYC. So we have a special obligation to respond to Cindy's call.

However, not everyone has failed to publicize the event. The Libertarians at Antiwar.com are on the job, and its editor in chief Justin Raimondo wrote a superb column Monday on the hypocritical treatment of Sheehan by the "liberal" establishment. As Raimondo pointed out, Rush Limbaugh captured the hypocrisy of the liberal left in his commentary, thus:

"Now that she's headed to Martha's Vineyard, the State-Controlled Media, Charlie Gibson, State-Controlled Anchor, ABC: 'Enough already.' Cindy, leave it alone, get out, we're not interested, we're not going to cover you going to Martha's Vineyard because our guy is president now and you're just a hassle. You're just a problem. To these people, they never had any true, genuine emotional interest in her. She was just a pawn. She was just a woman to be used and then thrown overboard once they're through with her, and they're through with her. They don't want any part of Cindy Sheehan protesting against any war when Obama happens to be president."

It was four years ago this month that Cindy Sheehan concluded the original "Camp Casey," a 27 day vigil outside the Crawford, Texas home of George W. Bush. Sadly, many of the people who once stood beside her against Bush have turned their back on her, now that the war is the responsibility of their Democrat president. Above right: An iconic display from the Crawford roadside. Above left: One of the fields of crosses stretches out into the night. Below: Taps is played at "Camp Casey" for the final time. (photos by Wally Cuddeford, August 2005)

Limbaugh has their number, just as they have his. Sometimes it is quite amazing how well each of the war parties can spot the other's hypocrisy. But Cindy Sheehan is no one's dupe; she is a very smart and very determined woman who no doubt is giving a lot of White House operatives some very sleepless nights out there on the Vineyard. Good for her.

Obama is an enormous gift to the Empire. Just as he has silenced most of the single-payer movement, an effort characterized by its superb scholarship exceeded only by its timidity, Obama has shut down the antiwar movement, completely in thrall as it is to the Democrat Party and Identity Politics. Why exactly the peace movement has caved to Obama is not entirely clear. Like the single-payer movement, it is wracked by spinelessness, brimming with reverence for authority and a near insatiable appetite to be "part of the crowd." Those taken in by Obama's arguments that the increasingly bloody and brutal Af-Pak war is actually a "war of necessity," should read Steven Walt's easy demolition of that "argument" (walt.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/08/18/the_safe_haven_myth). Basically Obama's logic is the same as Bush's moronic rationale that "We are fighting them over there so we do not have to fight them over here." There is a potential for "safe havens for terrorists," as the Obamalogues and neocons like to call them, all over the world; and no one can possibly believe the US can invade them all. However, the ones which Israel detests or which allow control of oil pipelines or permit encirclement of China and Russia will see US troops sooner or later.

The bottom line is that everyone in New England and NYC who is a genuine antiwarrior should join the imaginative effort of Cindy Sheehan in Obamaland this week and weekend. We owe it to the many who will otherwise perish at the hands of the war parties of Bush and Obama.

Originally posted on Counterpunch, August 26. John V. Walsh can be reached at John.Endwar@gmail.com He welcomes comments, and he looks forward to seeing crowds of CounterPunchers at Martha's Vineyard during Obama's stay.

Blueprint for a coup

How the Honduran regime has kept Zelaya in exile

By Bruce Wilkinson

On June 28 in the early morning, President Zelaya was awoken by gunshots as a general, two colonels and 200 soldiers fired through the door of his home. Kidnapped in his pajamas, he was flown to Costa Rica, a short flight of less than an hour from Tegucigalpa, stopping once at the US Air Force base in Honduras to refuel. Quickly, the coup leaders followed through with their takeover of the government. They cut electricity over much of the major cities and shut down phone and cellular services. At the same time, the military raided and cut off television and radio stations supportive of Zelaya, taking full control over the public stations in order to dominate the media message.

The morning of the coup was going to be a significant day for the people of Honduras. For months the social movements had been building support for a non-binding referendum which stated, "Do you agree that during the general elections of November 2009 there should be a fourth ballot to decide whether to hold a Constituent National Assembly that will approve a new political constitution?" Thousands marched peacefully to the Air Force hangar earlier that week to retrieve the ballots from the insubordinate Head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Romeo Orlando Vasquez Velasquez, who had refused to deliver them for the election. Fired by Zelaya, he was reinstated unlawfully by the Supreme Court, right before taking over through the coup.

Instead of opening their doors for the election, the voting centers remained locked and the ballots were being removed. Defiantly, and futilely, the people attempted to vote anyway. People took to the streets in protests but the military had set up barricades and checkpoints on the major roads. The right wing media owners played cartoons or music rather than report the news of the crowds building in the streets. Roberto Micheletti, formerly the Head of Congress, was sworn in as president. Judges created post facto arrest warrants against Zelaya, and a phony letter of resignation was presented to the media dated back three days previous.

A curfew was enacted for two days. From 7pm to 6am, no one was allowed in the streets but the military and police. That was loosened slightly but extended for two weeks with some reports saying that it is still in effect. During the curfew period the police and military would raid the homes of Zelaya supporters and journalists defiantly reporting the reality of what was taking place. Most foreign journalists were removed. Telesur were the only international journalists left reporting from the front lines, though they were beaten and had to take refuge at the Venezuelan Embassy. The Prensa, a major daily newspaper complicit in the coup, even went so far as to photoshop the blood and bullet wound out of a picture of Isis Murillo, 19, the first protestor killed by the military at the airport where many others were wounded when Zelaya attempted to land in Tegucigalpa.

Many more murders, disappearances and arrests were to follow as the resistance organized massive protest marches and nationwide strikes. Eleven murders have been verified by international observers so far, who have also documented civil rights violations, violence and rape against women, and the beating up and repression of protestors by chemical means, live ammunition and clubs. Commerce has come to a near standstill, with reports emerging of the blockading of highways with burning tires.

Despite Hondurans being thrust to the verge of civil war against a military dictatorship, the US government continues to take little action. After Obama first proclaimed it a coup the State Department has been backpedaling away from that term and the automatic sanctions that it implies. Dutifully the mainstream media is also backpedaling, blaming Zelaya for his own violent removal, ignoring the deterioration of law and order, reporting on the never ending negotiation taking place in Costa Rica, or not covering the story altogether.

The regime that is attempting to control Honduras does not look or act in a democratic or constitutional way. The perpetrators of this coup are criminals or, to indulge in the fervor of modern foreign policy terminology, terrorists. President Zelaya, a member of the Liberal Party, which is equivalent to US democrats, was elected in 2005. He was a center left member of the political elite establishment that had ruled the country for over two decades. His ouster harkens back to the darker days of military rule that tepidly ended in the early 1980s. Reinforcing that notion the regime is attempting to pass mandatory military service for all Hondurans.

The current Honduran Constitution was created in 1982 as the military turned power over to a civilian government. President Reagan was beginning his killing spree in Central America and found an ally in Honduras' repressive government. Honduras was home base for Ambassador John Negroponte and Colonel Oliver North when they were fighting dirty wars and supporting death squads in neighboring Nicaragua and El Salvador. Honduras was nicknamed the "USS Honduras" by some because of their close military ties with the US. Many Honduran soldiers have been trained at the School of the Americas (SOA) at Fort Benning, Georgia, including the former Honduran Dictator from 1980-82, Policarpo Paz Garcia, who supported the nefarious death squad Battalion 316, whose members now again have positions in government.

The right wing media owners played cartoons or music rather than report the news of the crowds building in the streets. Judges created post facto arrest warrants against Zelaya, and a phony letter of resignation was presented to the media dated back three days previous.

Many members of the current regime were trained at the SOA. Head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Romeo Orlando Vasquez Velasquez, is one graduate. Another commander trained at SOA, Colonel Herberth Bayardo Inestroza, told the Miami Herald, "It would be difficult for us, with our training, to have a relationship with a leftist government. That's impossible."

President Zelaya has said that there are ten ruling families in Honduras that hold power. For the "troglodytes," as Hugo Chavez so eloquently called the coup leaders, the referendum was the final straw, although it was not the first thing to upset the families. Honduras is one of the poorest countries in Central America. 70 percent of the country lives in poverty and 50 percent live in extreme poverty, according to the Inter-American Development Bank. Zelaya angered the Honduran Council of Private Enterprise (COHEP) when he addressed this problem by increasing minimum wage from $157 to $289 per month at the beginning of this year. He also ruffled their feathers when he was the second to join the Bolivarian Alliance of the Americas, or ALBA, a trading group started by Venezuela and Cuba to form mutually beneficial trade between Latin American countries. The IMF and World Bank offered loans with stringent rules that would trickle the money in, while ALBA offered better long-term rates with no policy strings attached.

These moves by President Zelaya increased his popularity with the majority poor and endeared him, critically, to the strong social movements. However the US media has made it seem as though he was hated. The Wall Street Journal issued a correction for inaccurately representing a CID-Gallop poll commissioned by the Honduran newspaper Prensa. In the original article they stated a plurality of 41 percent thought the ouster of Zelaya was justified while 28 percent didn't. In reality the poll stated the opposite, that a plurality of 46 percent objected to the action taken to remove Zelaya while 41 percent agreed with it. This poll and the pictures that show the massive size of the pro Zelaya crowds paint a very different picture of his popularity.

Internationally, not a single country has recognized the coup government. The United Nations and the Organisation of American States have both called for Zelaya's re-instatement with no strings attached. The EU cut off payments of $98 million in development aid. The US has only removed $16.5 million in military support but $180 million in development funds is still being delivered. This isn't surprising since the coup government has hired Washington insider and close Clinton friend Lanny Davis to lobby on their behalf, as well as Bennett Ratcliff, another close Clinton advisor, to help with the negotiations in Costa Rica.

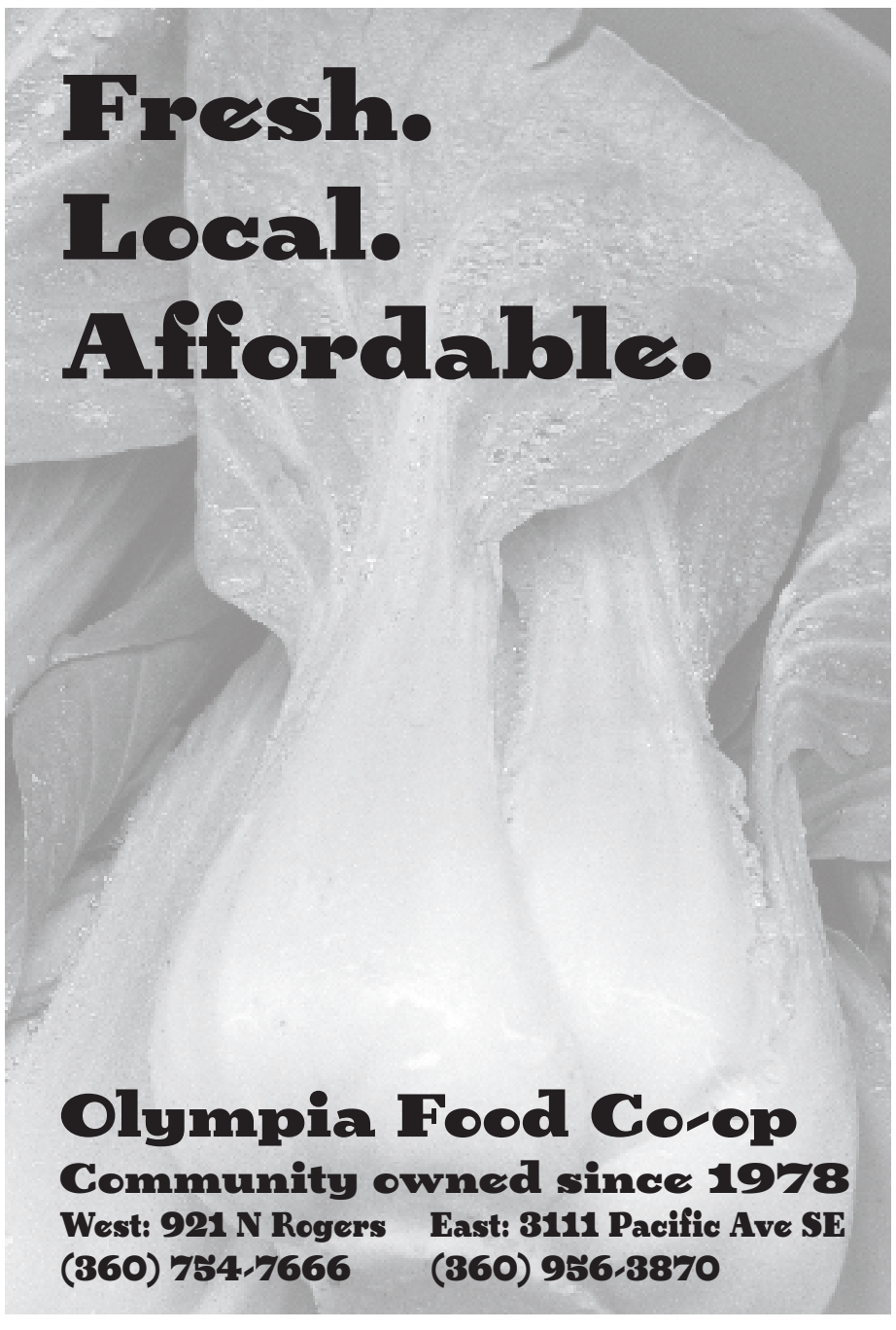
The coup represents the sort of regressive politicians that would be thoroughly rejected in the US even perhaps by Republicans, which makes Obama and Hillary Clinton's complicit approval all the more stunning. Regime Foreign Minister Enrique Ortez Colindres was quoted by the El Tiempo newspaper as saying, "I have negotiated with queers, prostitutes, birdbrains (meaning leftists), blacks, whites. This is my job. I studied for it. I am not racially prejudiced. I like the little black sugar plantation worker who is President of the United States." After saying this he wasn't fired but transferred to a new position as Minister of Government and Justice where he will be in charge of human rights issues.

The US could stop this from erupting into civil war. In the House of Representatives, Rep. Bill Delahunt and Rep. Jim McGovern have introduced a resolution calling for President Zelaya to be returned to office. Locally, Representative Adam Smith has signed on as a co-sponsor of this luke-warm bill. The US has stopped short of freezing the bank accounts of regime leaders, although they have revoked five visas after it was shown that one of the coup generals had a speaking engagement in Florida. While little more can be expected in action from our government, internal pressure should continue to increase.

Here in Olympia the local Latin American Solidarity Organization is drawing attention to this issue by bringing Lisa Sullivan, born in the US but residing in Venezuela, to speak about her trip to Honduras as a leader of SOA Watch, documenting the social movements struggling against the regime. The social movements have united in support of Zelaya but also seek recognition as a third coalition that deserves a place in any negotiated outcome.

Two events are scheduled for Wednesday, September 30th. The first is being held at Evergreen in Seminar 2, E 1105 at 1:30, with a second slightly different talk at Traditions Cafe at 7 pm.

Bruce Wilkinson is a student at the Evergreen State College and a member of the Latin American Solidarity Organization, LASO, which meets bi-monthly at Media Island.



Investigation into the death of Stephen Edwards

By Drew Hendricks

Editor's note: This article was originally published in the April 2003 issue of Works In Progress. *A WIP reader and contributor recently requested that we reprint this article for the benefit of those who have moved to Olympia since these events were first publicized.*

On November 7, 2002, at ten 'till three in the afternoon, Stephen Edwards, a 59 year old man from Shelton, did not know he was about to die in police handcuffs.

Stephen and his wife Cindy had just left the Bayview Thriftway in downtown Olympia. As they walked into the parking lot, a man dressed in dark clothes accosted Stephen, and a struggle began between the two men. By ten minutes after three, Stephen was blue in the face, and was soon being rushed to the hospital in an ambulance. He was declared dead at the hospital less than an hour later.

News accounts later published in the Olympian would claim that Stephen was an overweight, out of control, armed shoplifter who was subdued by Olympia Police Officers to protect themselves and the public from his handgun. Those same accounts would claim that he died of 'natural' causes from a heart arrhythmia, or abnormal heartbeat, brought about by his struggle. According to the TASER manufacturer's hired spokespersons, the use of four jolts of 50,000 volts each would be "unlikely" to have had anything to do with the heart attack.

The Thurston County Sheriff's Office and Coroner both signed documents clearing Olympia Police of any wrongdoing and laid the case at the door of the Olympia City Attorney, recommending that Stephen's widow Cindy be prosecuted for third degree theft. The police officers who had arrested Stephen were put back on active patrols, and life - for everyone but Stephen's family - returned to normal.

The Investigation Which Wasn't

Because Stephen died while in Olympia Police custody, an outside agency was called in to investigate the incident. That outside agency was the Thurston County Sheriff's Department (TCSO).

The TCSO assigned Detective David Haller, a veteran investigator in the property crime section, to lead the investigation. Detective Haller did what he usually does at the scene of a shoplift; he sought to prove that the suspect had stolen property, and in this case he also sought to prove that the suspect's wife had fled the scene afterward by calling a friend for a ride.

The TCSO also interviewed the officers involved. Olympia Police Officer Jeffrey D. Jordan, who was the first responder to the scene, had used his TASER four times in just 60 seconds, according to TCSO reports. Jordan had first used his TASER when Stephen was walking away from him, in an effort to get Stephen to stop. Officer Jordan did not yet know that a gun might be involved, because no one had told him by then. News stories in the Olympian would later miss this detail, claiming that the officer had used the weapon defensively after a furtive movement by the suspected shoplifter.

The second responding officer, Paul R Bakala, assisted in the arrest by standing on Stephen's hand and punching him in the face as Stephen kneeled on his hands and knees on the ground. This was the blow which finally succeeded in gaining control over Stephen. Paul and Jeffrey used two pairs of handcuffs, linked end to end, to restrain Stephen Edwards face down on the damp November pavement. Less than fifteen minutes later, that was where Stephen died. He was never moved to a car; he was never questioned about his side of the story. No one found his wife to tell her what had happened. (She waited at the store for him, asked the officers at the scene for information, and eventually had to call a friend to pick her up. She was arrested at her home by TCSO Detectives Haller and Clark later that night, although they did not book her.)

The man who accosted Stephen, Bayview plainclothes security guard Dion McNeeley of Yelm, later told TCSO investigators that he heard Stephen complain twice that he could not breathe properly, after he had been handcuffed. Officer Jordan recalled that he also heard Stephen mention this, once. Neither man turned Stephen over or lifted him into a vehicle.

> Bayview plainclothes security guard Dion McNeeley later told TCSO investigators that he heard Stephen complain twice that he could not breathe properly.

Former Pierce County Medical Examiner, Emmanuel Lacsina, later concluded that Stephen had no signs of 'positional asphyxiation,' a condition in which handcuffed persons are suffocated by their own weight after being improperly restrained. Lacsina had done the autopsy for Thurston County Coroner Judy Arnold's office. His conclusions also noted that the health of the overweight man was poor, causing a 'probable cardiac arrhythmia,' leading to death.

The pathologist wrote in his report that uncited "literature on the safety of the TASER" indicated that a 50,000 volt, 26 watt jolt could not have caused Stephen's death, although no mention was made of how many jolts were administered or at what times they had been delivered. TCSO reports concluded that all four jolts were given in just one minute. The TASER keeps an electronic log of its trigger times and dates for later analysis.

The TASER's user manual clearly states that it is a deadly weapon and should not be used except in self-defense.

The Independent Investigation

Olympia Copwatch began investigating this incident by requesting every report available for Olympia case number 2002-09614, TCSO case number 02-45433-11, and Coroner's case number 02-1417-11. We were given much documentation, but what was missing was more telling than what was present.

We were not given the incident reports or interview transcripts of the two first responder officers, Jordan and Bakala. We were not given transcripts of the interviews with the plain clothes security guard. We were not given the witness statements of the persons closest to Mr and Mrs Edwards as the incident began. We were told this was because the records were "preconviction data on Mrs Edwards" and were exempt from disclosure for that reason.

At least we now understood the bizarre practice of charging a widow with contributing to shoplifting.

That 'reason' for nondisclosure does not explain the absence of the radio logs or TASER log in the first releases, nor does it explain why Thurston County Sheriff's Office has released no documents at all in the case. While TCSO did let us view, twice, the summary investigative report written by Detective Haller, they did not let us have a photocopy of that document. Fortunately someone at the department decided to leak an unredacted version to us, and we were able to get the names of the witnesses and participants.

This investigative summary is the same document which Prosecutor Phillip Harju reviewed in making his determination that no wrongdoing was found on the part of the Olympia Police Officers. Yet it is also the source for many of the damaging facts we have so far uncovered. It is also where we found that the use of the TASER in the Olympia Police Department is considered appropriate BEFORE the use of OC Spray. Detective Haller wrote in his summary that Officer Jordan's use of the TASER fit Olympia Use of Force Guidelines section 4, a section including arm locks and hair grabs as possible actions. Level 5 is pepper (OC) spray by itself.

> According to the TASER manufacturer's hired spokespersons, the use of four jolts of 50,000 volts each would be "unlikely" to have had anything to do with the heart attack.

A review of local departments has found that Olympia has so far used TASERs almost 15 times more than all other departments combined, in just one year of deployment. Tumwater, which had them for two years at the time of our query, had used them just four times. Lacey officials could not recall any uses, but had only deployed them for a few months at the time of our query. The Evergreen State College has never used them on patrol, only in training. So far we have counted 24 uses of TASERS in Olympia, in little over a year of deployment.

The handgun supposedly found on Mr Edwards and reported stolen in the Olympian turns out to have two different serial numbers, depending on which police report you read. Who knows which is which and whose it was?

Drew Hendricks is a long-time local activist and organizer for Olympia Copwatch.

UPDATES

By the WIP Staff

The author of this piece has asked that a few points be added and clarified:

- The author continued his investigation after the original publication of this article. While speaking with Dion McNeely over the phone, McNeely informed the author that the Thurston County Sheriff's Office had never returned his handcuffs or his handgun, which had been picked up at the scene.
- The author believes the fact that two different police reports cite two different serial numbers for the weapon is because the police likely entered McNeely's gun into evidence, claiming it was Edwards', and that the change of serial numbers was an attempt to cover this up.
- Officers Jordan and Bakala are still active with the Olympia Police Department.
- Finally, the Olympia Use of Force Guidelines have since been modified from five steps down to three.

▸ **TOWERY,** continued from page 1

ing trojan on there that would report user keystrokes and web activity to the US Army similar to the FBI's Computer and Internet Protocol Address Verifier or Green Lantern software. I quickly got to imaging the hard drives, which means copying everything on the hard drive (even the blank space) to a backup drive where it can be looked at. This process can take all day so I had to leave the computer unattended. I didn't tell very many people what was going on, but it wouldn't have taken them long to figure out that I'd be doing this as standard practice. I had hooked up my flask-like hard drive to the back of the computer, snaking the cable and the drive behind a bookshelf where I was sure nobody would find it (not even some traveler kid with a liking for other people's belongings). When I came in the next morning, the drive and the cable had disappeared. I had several people watching the hard drive, so they had to wait until the computers were unsupervised. The computer was powered off so I couldn't tell when the drive was stolen and the CD I was using to image the drives was left standing upright on the keyboard. Maybe it was a taunt.

I wasn't the only one Towery tried to impress with his hacking skills. One time when the Olympia Port Militarization Resistance email lists were losing and delaying messages due to a military movement and somebody brought it up, he quickly moved in to resolve the concerns people were having. Showing his intricate technical knowledge of the riseup.net mailing system, he explained how their email queue was "first in first out", saying that's why recently sent messages seemed to be coming through while older ones were not. Of course, this explanation was totally false and no email system in the world works like that – but it stopped people from trying to figure out the true cause of the delays.

In my conversations with John, it was clear that he indeed was a hacker. He knew how networks worked, he knew about databases, and he knew about encryption. He might have been actively involved in the hacking scene when he was a kid, back when 640 kilobytes of memory was "all you'd ever need" and you could still steal pay phone calls by playing a special tone into the handset. Hackers have a way of knowing who each other are; maybe we have a look to us. John hid his real identity from all of us, but he didn't hide the fact that he was a hacker – perhaps that's why. On one level, his work in our community was just a big hack. He broke in, got past our security, and stole sensitive internal data from us. John Towery is a hacker if I've ever seen one.

If you know of any other situations where John has had access to or tried to "repair" computers that community members use, please get in touch with me. You can email me or find me at PMR meetings.

Ringo is a local activist, affiliated with Olympia Port Militarization Resistance and Oly HackBloc. He can be reached at ringo@hackbloc.org. More information on John Towery is available at johntowery.com. If you have tips, information, or experiences relating to Towery, please send them to submissions@johntowery.com.

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In Vietnam, you're never a tourist

By Larry Hildes and Karen Weill

In this time when the United States is mired in two wars with no end in sight, no plan for ending them and absolutely no sense of history, it seems appropriate to look back at another war that the US fought for many years, under other regimes, Democrat and Republican, for no good reason, and based on lies.

It's too easy living in the relatively comfortable situation that we do in the US, even as we work to end the wars, to not realize the full impact of the destruction being wreaked in our name.

We are as guilty of that as any. You don't really understand the depth of the war crimes, until you talk to the people and see the places where we inflicted them.

We traveled to Hanoi in June of this year to attend the Quadrennial Congress of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers which brings together radical civil rights and human rights lawyers from around the world. As we prepared to go and mentioned to various activists where we were going, the Vietnam Vets among them kept emphasizing the significance of going there because of the War. In our naiveté, we agreed, and thought to ourselves, 'Yeah, I know, but the War has been over for 35 years. It'll come up. But mostly Vietnam is an exotic place to go for a great conference to discuss important issues of peace and human rights. It's a beautiful country, and it's been on our travel list for a long time.'

We could not have been more wrong. It is a beautiful country, very different from ours in a million ways both delightful and frustrating, and we're very glad to have gone there, but the War, the American War, as it is known by the Vietnamese, was a daily presence in the lives of the people, the suffering that continues, and the baggage we brought with us.

It came up soon after we arrived, and Karen encountered it first, on a government tour that was given to us by the host committee. We were on different conference tracks, and so went on different days; Karen did the tour of the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, and several fabulous museums and cultural sites on Sunday, two days after we arrived. This was her experience:

We came in to the Mausoleum through the VIP/foreigners' entrance; through a snafu with directions, some members of the tour and I had originally come to the People's entrance, the Vietnamese entrance. The line from there wraps around the huge complex; it looked like it was at least a mile, with 10,000 crammed into the narrow walkway just before the entrance. People come from all over Vietnam to pay their respects.

After you come out of the Mausoleum, the line snakes through the complex to view first the Presidential Palace, built by the French for their French-born governor and then appropriated by the Vietnamese. Ho Chi Minh felt it was too grand for a single, simple man, so he lived in two smaller buildings. One was his primary residence and conference room: above, on the second floor, a two-room simple wooden structure, raised on stilts to provide single wide area below, on the ground, left with a dirt floor, about the size of a small conference room, where the breeze could blow while he and his ministers met around a straight-forward table.

At that point, I spied them: a group of Vietnamese soldiers in the old green uniforms that I had seen so often from pictures of the war with the U.S., some of them with medals hanging from their front pockets. I became as curious and stared as much as all the Vietnamese stare at me (white faces are still vastly in the minority, despite the opening up of Vietnam and the encouragement of tourism). I was excited and so much wanted to talk to them. What state were they from? Where had they fought? Did they get to met their Uncle Ho? Did they ever hear him talk? How do they feel about the U.S. today? We are supporters of the U.S. group Veterans for Peace, which helped to start the Vietnam Friendship Village, an organization that helps children and veterans affected by land mines and Agent Orange. We know several former US soldiers who fought in the war. I ached to reach out to the Vietnamese, to offer a bridge of peace, or even a contact of peace. But it was too sudden, to come across them like this. I could not formulate the words to tell our translator why I was so excited, and my Vietnamese is non-existent. We stared at each other several times in the walk through the complex, sometimes only two or three feet away, but it might as well have been opposite sides of the Grand Canyon. I finally asked permission to take a photo. I wanted to not just take a picture of them, but to have a picture *with* them, but even that part didn't come across. They shook their heads no. To have it come down to such a dumb tourist gesture. I felt so sad. They are clearly all older; they must be in their 60s and 70s, who knew if we would have another chance. And who knows how they feel about being approached by this overweight middle-class white US woman after all they had been through.

For Larry, the first moment was easier and relatively safe, at least for Larry: When I took the tour the day after Karen, we went from Ho Chi Minh's mausoleum and museums to the Army Museum. There was McCain's plane, and various captured US military equipment displayed outside, and inside, a guide from the Vietnamese Army proudly led us through exhibits on the Japanese, French, and American Wars and how the Vietnamese had won. We, a delegation coincidentally or not, Japanese, French, and US lawyers and law students responded to the guide's gracious hope that we could all live in peace, with heartfelt statements about how glad we were that the Vietnamese had won their country back from each of our countries, the wave after wave of invaders. It was true, and allowed us to all feel good about defying empire.

> Now that we have returned to the US, which acts as if every harm it causes is approved by God, we struggle with the lessons we have learned.

A couple of days later, it became more personal on the last day of the Congress.

Karen and I sat in on an incredible discussion between NLG law students and Vietnamese students, some law, some language students, and after feeling each other out and comparing educational systems, one of the US law students, Dan, brought the discussion to the heart of the issue, The War. The Vietnamese students are very angry about Agent Orange (the Orange Poison as they aptly call it) and everyone seems to know people who are affected by it, now into a third generation. There are now grandchildren being born affected by this scourge we have left on and, as the water leeches it, in the land, and worse, in the genes of the people we brutalized with our toxic chemicals, turned into weapons of war, sprayed from on high by those who never saw the effect of what they did. Shock and awe, 1970s style. Our war crimes continue long after we have left.

When the war itself came up, they were staggeringly gracious, differentiating between Lyndon Johnson and the US people. Citing the Mobilization march, and other demonstrations, they are taught in school, and talk about how the US people stood in solidarity with the people of Vietnam and made the government stop fighting the war. They have pictures in their history books and museums showing the major marches in the US against what we call the Vietnam War, and they call the American War, and display signs and leaflets from our end of the struggle to end that horrible War.

They talked about how US soldiers were victims and suffer as well.

I had to say something: They gave us way too much credit! It was a struggle then as it is a struggle now to get people in the US into the streets, and to actually empathize about the suffering of others, to actually see the world beyond the US. In the midst of crying, I was able to apologize and to tell them how glad I was that they had won the war and to sit here in a free Vietnam.

Karen, the US law students, and others made wonderful eloquent statements.

One of the Vietnamese quoted Uncle Ho saying that we will drive the Americans out of the country and then, when they ask to come back as equals, to roll out the carpet and welcome us back. And, here we are.

We hugged and cried together, and posed for pictures. It was an amazing connection. Solidarity in beautiful radiance.

The next day, the war was revisited as we traveled as part of a delegation from the IADL to the Vietnam Friendship Village. The Friendship Village was established by a member of Vets for Peace to atone for his actions during The War. It is now funded by donations from at least five countries, four of which did not even participate in the War, as well as by the Vietnamese government. At the Friendship Village victims of Agent Orange (mostly children), now into the third generation, are treated, educated, and taught skills. We were, out of typical Vietnamese graciousness, not shown the worst victims, scarred and deformed, but what we saw was still extraordinarily painful, and unknown in the US. As one of the students from the discussion the day before demanded with polite anger, "When will Americans accept responsibility for the suffering they cause?" When indeed? Larry found himself getting angry the rest of the day, and only later understood how much of that was anger at what we had seen in those children's faces and bodies.

At the Friendship Village, we finally made the connection that Karen had craved, meeting a group of Vietnamese Veterans of the American War, still in uniform, at the Friendship Village for medical treatment. Smiling, they greeted us, took our hands, and posed for pictures. There was a sense of unity and solidarity that Larry has yet to find language to express.

Throughout the remainder of our stay, once we knew how to look, we found shrines tucked into street corners and in town squares to the at least two million dead of the American War. The dead are mourned and honored as an ongoing, endless process of scarring and healing.

One of the most powerful experiences awaited us on the last full day of our trip.

We were relaxing in Hanoi, in one of the most peaceful places we've ever found in a big city. We were sitting on a bench out at the temple in the middle of Hoan Kiem Lake, looking for the legendary turtles that inhabit the lake and are said to be emissaries from the Gods. We were approached by an elderly Vietnamese man, who at first said, "American?" When we nodded, he responded with a rush of Vietnamese. Karen held her hands up in confusion, and said, in English, that we don't speak Vietnamese. Again, he said, "American?" Larry said, yes, but we don't speak Vietnamese. We went through this another time, with him speaking Vietnamese and us speaking English. It was obviously very important to him to make the connection with us, but the Congress was over and we had no translators. Suddenly, he pulled his neatly tucked shirt out of his pants, squatted down in front of us, with his back turned to US. He continued to pull his shirt up to his shoulders, so that his entire back was clearly visible. He continued to speak in Vietnamese, very insistently. Larry suddenly connected: He was showing us the scars across the middle of his back. They could have been marks of torture, or marks from bullets. He was not content, and would not get up again, until both of us had touched the scars on his back, demonstrating that we knew that was what he was showing us.

A fellow US delegate had celebrated her birthday while on this trip. She had decided early on that a good way to celebrate would be to find someone who had been harmed in the War, and she would apologize to them. Karen remembered her story of having found a man working as a "cyclo" driver, taking people around on his combination bicycle-taxi, and the words she had used. We, too, said, "Sin Loi" (I'm sorry). He turned back around, and his smile was blinding, and his eyes lit up. With each of us, he took one hand in both of his, shaking our hands so warmly, and bowing. His face remains burned in our memories.

Now that we have returned to the US, which takes responsibility still for nothing and acts as if everything it does and every harm it causes is approved by God, we struggle with the lessons we have learned.

The Vietnamese, as Iraqis and Afghanis, and the others that we wage war against were claimed not to value life as we do. There is the old stupid cliché spouted during the War and now again about Iraqis, Afghanis, Arabs and Muslims, that they don't value life as we do. As we traveled, met the Vietnamese, and came to understand the effect that the War has had on them, it became very clear that they value life in ways that we in the US can barely begin to understand. If we dig, it will not take long to find that that is true of the Iraqis and Afghanis as well.

Another lesson has given us hope as we struggle to end our current wars and feel, as we do, isolated and hopeless. The students showed us that every little demonstration that we suffer through where we think no one is watching, no media are covering it, and only 50 people show up, makes a difference in solidarity. People are watching, and 30 years from now, young Iraqis will learn about our marches in their history books.

Imperialism can be defeated, by determined nations, under-armed, poor, but determined. The empire cannot maintain occupations in the face of committed resistance, and Empires always fall.

Stay strong and keep fighting. We must, if history is any judge, prevail, and one day we will walk in a free Afghanistan and a free Iraq and talk with gracious people who will thank us for our small contribution to ending the occupations and wars.

Larry Hildes and Karen Weill are members of the National Lawyers Guild, and routinely represent local activists in political court cases.

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